

**The Promises of YHWH:
Kept at All Costs**
Ezekiel 20:1-44

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Overview

- **The Trial of Israel (Mic. 6:1-8)**
- **The Covenant History of Israel**
 - **The Promises of YHWH**
 - **The Shabbat**
 - **The Divine Name**
- **Ezekiel viewed the covenant history of Israel through the lens of the Holiness Code**
- **Salvation**

Appeal Rejected

- ***“As I live, I will not respond to your inquiry- declares the Lord God.” (Ezek. 20:3)***
- **What did the elders ask that prompted the following answer?**
- ***“Shall I respond to your inquiry, O House of Israel? ...what you have in mind shall never come to pass – when you say, we will be like the nations... worshipping wood and stone.” (Ezek. 20:32)***

Structure of the Oracle

- Ezekiel 20:5-26 contains five parallel sections
- Each section provides the same six key elements of information:
 - *promise*
 - *rebellion*
 - *generation*
 - *location*
 - *action*
 - *rationale*

Section 1 (Ezekiel 20:5-9)

- **Promise:** ...to bring them out from the land of Egypt...
לְהוֹצִיא־ם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
- **Rebellion:** ...and the idols of Egypt they did not abandon...
וְאֶת-גְּלוּלֵי מִצְרַיִם לֹא עָזְבוּ
- **Generation:** ...the offspring of the house of Jacob...
לְזֶרַע בֵּית יַעֲקֹב
- **When/Where:** ...in the land of Egypt...
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
- **Reaction:** ...to pour out my wrath on them...
לְשַׁפֵּךְ חֲמָתִי עֲלֵיהֶם
- **Rationale:** ...and I acted for the sake of my name to not be profaned...
וְאֵעֲשֶׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמִי לְבִלְתִּי הִחָל

The Promises of YHWH

- The *promises* of YHWH have defined the very relationship between YHWH and Israel
- YHWH *promised* to:
 - bring the House of Jacob out of land of Egypt
 - covenant with Israel w/ Shabbat as sign
 - not bring rebellious generation into the land
 - covenant w/ descendants of Israel w/Shabbat as sign
 - scatter, not destroy, descendants of Israel
 - gather the people in the fullness of time & redeem

Shabbat (שַׁבָּת) as a Sign

- A sign between YHWH and people of Israel
- A sign “*throughout the ages*” (Exod. 31:13)
- A sign of holiness that must not be profaned

Section 2 (Ezekiel 20:10-14)

- **Promise:** ...my Sabbaths I gave to them to be to a sign...
אֶת־שַׁבְּתוֹתַי נָתַתִּי לָהֶם לְהִיזוֹת לְאֹת
- **Rebellion:** ...and my Sabbaths they much profaned...
וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתוֹתַי חָלְלוּ מְאֹד
- **Generation:** ...the House of Israel...
בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל
- **When/Where:** ...in the desert...
בַּמִּדְבָּר
- **Reaction:** ...in the desert to destroy them...
בַּמִּדְבָּר לְכַלּוֹתָם
- **Rationale:** ... and I acted for the sake of my name to not be profaned...
וְאֶעֱשֶׂה לְמַעַן שְׁמִי לְבִלְתִּי הֵחָל

Section 3 (Ezekiel 20:15-17)

- **Promise:** ...to not bring them to the land which I had given...
לְבַלְתִּי הָבִיא אוֹתָם אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי
- **Rebellion:** ...and my Sabbaths they profaned...
וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתוֹתַי חָלְלוּ
- **Generation:** ...to them... (same as section 2 - the House of Israel)
לָהֶם
- **When/Where:** ...in the desert...
בַּמִּדְבָּר
- **Reaction:** ...and I did not make them complete destruction in the desert...
וְלֹא־עָשִׂיתִי אוֹתָם כְּלֵה בַּמִּדְבָּר
- **Rationale:** ...and my eye took pity on them...
וַתַּחַס עֵינַי עֲלֵיהֶם

Shabbat and the Holiness Code

- **Shabbat (7th day) – applies to people (Lev. 23:3)**
- **Shabbat (7th year) – applies to the land (Lev. 25:2-7)**
- **No add'l guidelines given for Shabbat while in Exile**
- **Added emphasis placed on Shabbat by the Holiness Code**

Section 4 (Ezekiel 20:18-22)

- **Promise:** ...treat my Sabbaths as holy and they will be to a sign...
וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתוֹתַי קִדְּשׁוּ וְהָיוּ לְאוֹת
- **Rebellion:** ...my Sabbaths they profaned...
אֶת־שַׁבְּתוֹתַי חִלְּלוּ
- **Generation:** ...the sons... (of the House of Israel)
הַבָּנִים
- **When/Where:** ...in the desert...
בַּמִּדְבָּר
- **Reaction:** ...to pour out my wrath on them...
לְשַׁפֵּךְ חֲמָתִי עֲלֵיהֶם
- **Rationale:** ...and I withheld my hand and acted for the sake of my name...
וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי אֶת־יָדִי וְאָעַשׂ לְמַעַן שְׁמִי

Theology of the Shabbat

- **What was Ezekiel's theology of the covenant history of Israel? How did he view/understand it?**
 - *"You I will scatter among the nations."* (Lev. 26:33)
 - *"...the land shall make up for its Sabbath years"* (Lev. 26:34)
 - *"...till seventy years were completed"* (2 Chr. 36:21)
- **Ezekiel viewed the covenant history of Israel through the lens of the Holiness Code**

Covenant History of Israel

(A Classic View)

40 Years in
Wilderness

Time of the Judges

Time of the Kings

70 Years
Serving Babylon



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Theology Behind the Forty Years

- **Formula used by Ezekiel is the same as used in Numbers**
 - ***“forty days... I impose on you one day for each year”***
(Ezek. 4:6)
 - ***“You shall bear your punishment for forty years, corresponding to the number of days – forty days – that you scouted the land: a year for each day.”***
(Num. 14:34)

Theology Behind the 390 Years

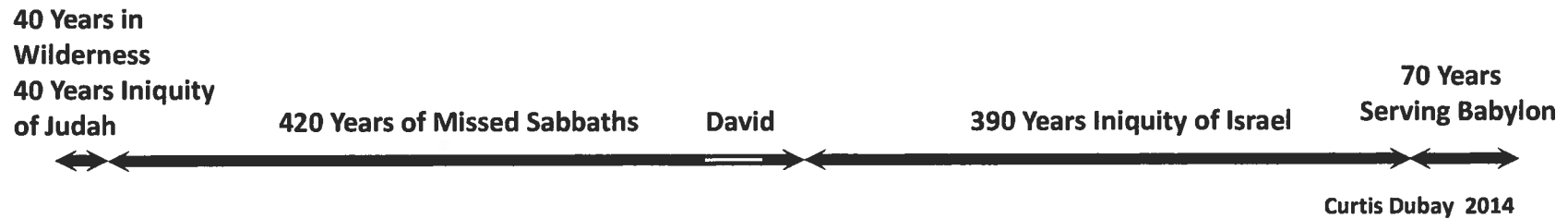
- Solomon completed palace in the 24th year of his reign
- Proximity of palace to Temple violated holiness of YHWH's throne
 - *“When they (kings of Israel) placed their threshold next to my threshold...”* (Ezek. 43:8)
 - *“...with only a wall between Me and them”* (Ezek. 43:8)
 - *“...they would defile My holy name”* (Ezek. 43:8)
- Same complaint reiterated/expanded in oracle of Utopian Temple
 - YHWH will dwelt apart from the dwellings of man to protect holiness

Theology Behind the Missed Shabbat

- **A complete accounting is demanded:**
 - **Israel profaned Shabbat 40 years in Wilderness**
 - **Descendants of Israel profaned Shabbat 420 years in the land (only exception was the reign of David)**
 - **The kings of Israel defiled the holy throne for another 390 years**
- **YHWH demanded repayment – started with 70 years service to Babylon, then scattered among the nations**

Covenant History of Israel

(A Canonical View)



Missed Sabbaths (in the Land)

Exodus to begin build Temple	480 yr	1 Kgs 6:1
Wilderness	-40 yr	Dt 8:2
Reign of David	-40 yr	2 Sm 5:4
Building of Temple/Palace	<u>20 yr</u>	1 Kgs 6:1, 2 Chr 3:2
	420 yr	

Iniquity of Israel

Post-Palace Complete	16 yr	1 Kgs 6:38, 7:1 & 9:10, 2 Chr 8:1
Rehoboam	17 yr	1 Kgs 14:21, 2 Chr 12:13
Abijam (Abijah)	3 yr	1 Kgs 15:2, 2 Chr 13:2
Asa	41 yr	1 Kgs 15:10, 2 Chr 16:13
Jehoshaphat	25 yr	1 Kgs 22:42, 2 Chr 20:31
Joram (Jehoram)	8 yr	2 Kgs 8:17, 2 Chr 21:20
Ahaziah	1 yr	2 Kgs 8:26, 2 Chr 22:2
Athaliah	6 yr	2 Kgs 11:3, 2 Chr 22:12
Jehoash (Joash)	40 yr	2 Kgs 12:2, 2 Chr 24:1
Amaziah	29 yr	2 Kgs 14:2, 2 Chr 25:1
Azariah (Uzziah)	52 yr	2 Kgs 15:2, 2 Chr 26:3
Jotham	16 yr	2 Kgs 15:33, 2 Chr 27:1
Ahaz	16 yr	2 Kgs 16:2, 2 Chr 28:1
Hezekiah	29 yr	2 Kgs 18:2, 2 Chr 29:1
Manasseh	55 yr	2 Kgs 21:1, 2 Chr 33:1
Amon	2 yr	2 Kgs 21:19, 2 Chr 33:21
Josiah	31 yr	2 Kgs 22:1, 2 Chr 34:1
Jehoahaz	3 mo	2 Kgs 23:31, 2 Chr 36:2
Jehoakim (until Exile)	<u>3 yr</u>	2 Kgs 23:36, 24:1, 2 Chr 36:5
	390 yr	

Section 5 (Ezekiel 20:23-26)

- **Promise:** ...to scatter them with the nations...
לְהַפִּיץ אֶתְכֶם בְּגוֹיִם
- **Rebellion:** ...and my Sabbaths they profaned...
וְאֶת־שַׁבְּתוֹתַי חָלְלוּ
- **Generation:** ...them... (the sons of the House of Israel)
אֶתְכֶם
- **When/Where:** ...in the desert...
בַּמִּדְבָּר
- **Reaction:** ...and I in turn gave to them not good rules and regulations and they will not live by them...
וְגַם־אֲנִי נָתַתִּי לָהֶם חֻקִּים לֹא טוֹבִים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים לֹא יִחִיו בָּהֶם
- **Rationale:** ...I will cause them to be appalled (or desolated)...
אֲשַׁמֶּם

The Divine Name

- Genesis times: *Elohim*
- Times of the Patriarchs: *El Shaddai*
- Moses and later: *YHWH*
- *Signature phrase* of the Holiness Code:
 - “*I am YHWH your God*”

Redemption and Salvation

- **Reasons to restore Israel:**
 - Vindication of YHWH's name
 - Fulfill YHWH's intentions for Israel
- **Not a matter of regaining glory that YHWH already has**
- **Concern for the divine name has been single most important factor shaping history of Israel**

Questions?

Iniquity of Israel

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